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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: D.A. Burke

Attorney Docket No. WEEI19402

Serial No: 08/632,022

Group Art Unit: 1308

Filed: April 15, 1996

Examiner: Neil McCarthy

Title: ANAEROBIC TREATMENT PROCESS FOR THE RAPID HYDROLYSIS AND
CONVERSION OF ORGANIC MATERIALS TO SOLUBLE AND GASEOUS
COMPONENTS

RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S ACTION MAILED OCTOBER 15, 1996

Seattle, Washington 98101

January 10, 1997

TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Responsive to the Examiner's Action mailed October 15, 1996, applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendment set forth below and reconsideration of the application in view of the remarks that follow.

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

1. (Amended) An anaerobic treatment process for the conversion of organic material to soluble and gaseous components comprising the steps:

contacting in a first anaerobic reactor, an influent stream containing the organic material with active anaerobic bacteria [from an anaerobic reactor] recycled from a second reactor;

maintaining the organic material in contact with the anaerobic bacteria for a predetermined period to partially digest the organic material;

mechanically or chemically separating suspended colloidal constituents and particulate constituents from the partially digested influent stream; and

delivering the separated suspended colloidal constituents and particulate constituents to the second anaerobic reactor for further digestion of organic material.